

THE FLORIDA AGRICULTURIST

DEVOTED TO
A JOURNAL
STATE INTERESTS

Library of Congress

Vol. XXXII—No. 51

Jacksonville and DeLand, Fla., Wednesday, December 20, 1905.

Whole No. 1627.

Why Marion County Won.

The Tampa Times explains why Marion county won the first prize, at the Fair, as follows:

The award of the first premium at the state fair to Marion county in the competition of collective exhibits is due to several causes, very prominent among them being the industrial and commercial character of its very systematic display. From the mere point of size and beauty its exhibit in the main building was inferior to several others. But it appealed successfully to the business instincts of the visitors and judges alike. It is the first county among those making a show, to undertake a systematic development of its agricultural resources along those lines which are recognized the county over as most promotive and productive of wealth—farm products and live stock.

This is in strict accord with the gospel which the Times has been for years preaching to the people of this state. We have here the foundation for the most prosperous commonwealth in the union, the climate, soil, productions and everything that is essential to the raising and sale of those farm articles which have the widest and most prominent market. Marion county has affirmed and proved this proposition, and has shown that there are people of intelligence engaged in such production with the most gratifying degree of success.

Florida has hitherto been relying too much upon her attractions rather than her resources, and right here is a difference and distinction which this paper wishes every reader to ponder. People do not and cannot live upon attractions. But upon resources they not only live, but they accumulate surplus wealth and power, and are then able to add as non-remunerative features of their lives such attractions as taste and means dictate. Attractions may only be displayed, but resources can be exploited to their full exhaustless extent, with such practical results as enrich the people engaged. Our attractions do draw to us many people already fixed. Our resources draw to us the larger number who wish to fix themselves. It need not be stated that the process of fixing is wealth creating, dispensing benefits to everybody. The enjoyment of attractions merely distributes in much smaller proportions and to much less advantage a wealth that has already been accumulated.

Let the whole state emulate the example of Marion county. Let it be remembered that in the possession of these resources Marion county is not one whit ahead of the balance of us—only in development and presentation of what may be made out of them. Hereafter the horse and cow and hog and sheep and hen will take precedence in public esteem of the beautiful fruits and flowers of our region. Corn, potatoes, peas, cassava,

grass, cabbages, onions—and in short the full list of things to be eaten by people and fed to stock, will take rank in front of the sweeter and more beautiful, but less substantial, products of our climate and soil.

Without depreciating in the least the wonderful merits of our fruit trees and vines, it is worth while for us all to take note that a new era has opened for Florida. The pathway to wealth and power has its initial point with us. Let us tread it with sense and resolution and industry, sure to arrive at the goal.

Florida's Banner Counties.

The generous contest which has been waged for the past twelve days at the Florida State Fair Grounds, for supremacy among the great and growing counties of this glorious State, was terminated yesterday, when the Board of Judges in the various departments of exhibits submitted their reports and the awards of merit were distributed.

No fairer method of deciding the contest than that adopted by the State Fair Association could have been followed. In each of the departments was a judge of recognized ability, experience and discernment, a man who was absolutely impartial between the counties competing. These judges graded the various counties in his special line and the totals were computed at a meeting of all the Commissioners of the competing counties yesterday afternoon. By this method, the particular excellencies of the various counties were merged into a general average, and, while one county's exhibit may have excelled another in some special line, it was the entire exhibit that was considered in judging the general county awards, while the special awards were based on the excellence of the county's exhibit in the particular department.

Marion county has achieved the general first award in all lines of exhibit, and is entitled to proudly wear the laurels of the Banner County of Florida until, at least, the next State Fair shall bring forth another generous rivalry. Marion is entitled to special merit for the completeness of its exhibit, no single item being neglected or slighted in the display which it made, under the supervision of its able Commissioner, Mr. W. M. Gist. The completeness of the Marion county exhibit is shown by the fact that it stood first, with a mark of 10, in five distinct departments, agriculture, cereals, minerals, forestry and live stock. Its total number of points was 82 out of a possible 140. The success of Marion county is largely due to the wisdom of its Commissioner in his endeavor to make his exhibit show the resources of the county, as they are, rather than seeking to exaggerate them by extraneous embellishments and gaudy decorations. To every citizen of this good county, the Tribune extends its congratulations on the proud honor which

it wears today—the blue ribbon of pre-eminent merit in the glorious sisterhood of Florida counties.

Hillsborough county, the home-county of the Fair, plays a creditable second in this harmony of prosperity, and feels no disgrace that it should have followed closely at the heels of its enterprising sister. Hillsborough has great cause for pride in the splendid showing which it has made—and it must be remembered by those inclined to feel the pangs of disappointment that our county wears the red rather than the blue, that Hillsborough has achieved its own share of glory in the origination and the holding of this great State Fair. This is honor enough for any people. Hillsborough holds first place in poultry, manufactures and schools, which is no small distinction, particularly the latter. Its handsome exhibit has been thronged daily by thousands of visitors, who have looked with critical eyes upon the showing made of its resources, and approbation has been as universal as it has been fervent. Commissioner Phil Collins, as the director of the exhibit, the assistants who aided him in the work, the enterprising County Commissioners who made the display possible and every individual who contributed to it deserves the highest praise.

Good old Polk, which has long been a neighbor and a friend to our own county, wears the white ribbon as the third best county competing at the Fair. The big-hearted and big-bodied Commissioner, Mr. McLean, who has devoted days and nights for months to the preparation of the exhibit which is thus crowned with a conspicuous laurel, should feel his heart pulse with pride today as he realizes the results of his labors—and every citizen of this good county should join with him in these gratifying sentiments. While Polk was first in none of the departments it was near the head in all and its general average easily entitled it to the third prize. Its booth was one of the handsomest ever shown at the Fair and it attracted the attention which it richly deserved from all who entered the inviting portals of the big Main Building.

Manatee, the blue-ribbon winner of last year, need yield pre-eminence to none of its competitors in the appearance and the general symmetry of its display this year. While Manatee's exhibit did not embrace all the departments, it was superior in many of them, and the brilliancy of its display made up in special lines what it lacked in comprehensiveness. It was the vegetable prize-winner, which in itself is an honor not to be despised. When the visitor to the Fair recounts the impressions which linger with him as he goes to his home, Manatee will suffer nothing in comparison with its sister counties. Its fame is far and wide and its name a synonym for climatic charm and rich productiveness. Mr. Parrish, the Commissioner, and

his assistants, need not feel ashamed to flaunt the yellow ribbon, which is emblematic of the golden fruit for which their county is known in all states and counties.

Alachua, fifth in general exhibit—first in cotton, second in agriculture and live stock, and near to the top in other lines, takes the fifth prize easily and, in such a competition, where every product of the soil was entered in the endeavor for high honors, the rich county which is to be the main seat of learning of Florida, has no reason to hang its head in shame. Major Tench made a showing that could not have been excelled with the resources placed at his disposal and he has done much for the future progress and prosperity of the people he represented. Alachua will derive benefits from its participation in the Fair greater than any that goes with the winning of ribbons and purses.

Lee county should feel pardonable pride in being enabled to herald itself in future as the "Banner Citrus Fruit County of Florida." In a state in which the culture of citrus fruit is a leading industry, an industry to which the very best efforts of skilled experts are devoted, it is a high honor to be acclaimed first in citrus fruit growing. Lee's exhibit at the State Fair included products of this nature that no other county in the state could show. No such diversified and at the same time, generally excellent exhibit of fruit, was ever made in the United States, and Lee's distinction as first in citrus fruits in Florida means, in fact, first in the United States, for Florida is first of all the states of the Union in this industry. Commissioner Philip Isaacs may bear home to his people a badge of honor that cannot be discounted and that is, in some respects, to be preferred even to the blue ribbon, as it is the badge of pre-eminence in a pre-eminent industry.

Nor must we omit to say that there is no reason for disappointment on the part of the other counties which, although they failed to bear away one of the major honors of the Fair, achieved, in particular lines awards of merit which should be appreciated. Orange, second in citrus fruits and poultry; Osceola, standing high in citrus fruits, vegetables, cereals, live stock, industrial schools; Lake, which proved a close rival in agriculture, whose minerals won special commendation; Baker, which was cereals and manufactures; Citrus, awarded first prize in horticulture, showing a display of growing fruit trees, cut flowers, etc., that could not be excelled; Pasco, which scored heavily with its tobacco and horticulture; Washington, winning third place with its cotton; Gadsden, prize-winner in tobacco-growing; all these good counties put their best feet foremost in the race and are not without honor among the counties of Florida. Indeed, the Tribune wishes to impress especially the fact that no county